

How to Bee Proof Your Property

The best way to prevent bees from establishing a colony on your property is to not provide them with an ideal environment for survival. Honeybees require three things in order to survive: food, water and shelter.



Remember, Africanized honeybees also nest in a wide variety of locations and may enter openings as small as 3/16-inch in diameter (about the size of a pencil eraser) as long as there is a suitable-sized cavity behind the opening for a nest.

Eliminate shelter. To prevent honeybees from settling in your house or yard, you will need to be vigilant in preventing potential nesting sites.

- Caulk cracks in walls, in the foundation and in the roof
- Fill or cover all holes 1/8-inch in diameter or larger in trees, structures and/or block walls.
- Check where the chimney meets the house for separation, and make sure chimneys are covered properly.
- Put small-mesh screen (such as window screen) over attic vents, irrigation valve boxes and water meter box key holes.
- Remove any trash or debris that might serve as a shelter for honeybees.
- Fill or cover animal burrows in the ground.
- Make sure window and sun screens are tight fitting.
- Keep shed doors tightly closed and in good repair and exercise caution when entering buildings that are not used frequently.



1. Inspect your home and yard regularly for signs of bee colonies. A single bee or just a few bees in your yard does not necessarily mean you have an established colony on your property because bees will fly some distance in search of food and water. Although honeybees use nectar and pollen from flowers as food, removing flowers as a source of food is generally not an effective bee deterrent.

Look for large numbers of bees passing into and out of or hovering in front of an opening. Listen for the hum of active insects. Look low for colonies in or at ground level, and also high for colonies under eaves or in attics.

2. If you find a colony on your property, consult a bee expert. If you do find an established bee colony in your neighborhood, don't panic. On the other hand, don't ignore them either. Small colonies that have recently swarmed may be docile at first, but tend to become more defensive with age. Have colonies located around the house removed as soon as possible.

Keep everyone away from the colony. Look in the Yellow Pages under "bee removal" or "pest control" for the names of beekeepers or pest control operators in your area who are qualified to remove the colony. Do not try to remove colonies yourself!